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NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: John McCall, UM Productions director, (406) 243-6661.

UM PEARL JAM CONCERT COULD BE STATE'S LARGEST MUSIC EVENT EVER MISSOULA--

Brace yourself Missoula. Saturday's 7:30 p.m. Pearl Jam concert at The University of Montana may be the largest musical event in the history of the state. About 22,000 rock fans are expected to cram into town, filling Missoula businesses and bars and creating hectic driving conditions -- especially near the University.

John McCall, director of UM Productions, said the sold-out concert at Washington-Grizzly Stadium is definitely the largest event ever to take place at UM. Workers began erecting the concert stage Tuesday, and more than 150 UM students have been hired to help with the event.

"Getting this all together has been a monumental task," McCall said, "but everything has been going really well so far. This is a great opportunity for students to get a taste for what the music promotions business is all about."

Before Pearl Jam, he said, the largest event UM ever hosted was a 1992 Garth Brooks concert in the Harry Adams Field House with 9,000 tickets sold. The last time the football stadium was used for a concert was a 1988 Smokey Robinson concert.

Pearl Jam appeared at UM twice before. A June 16, 1993, show was held at the University Theatre, and a Feb. 8, 1995, show rocked the field house. Both shows were sold out. Saturday's concert kicks off Pearl Jam's 1998 North American tour.

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UM Productions Concerts Coordinator Ellie Danch said 21,900 tickets were sold for the June 20 concert. Of those, 9,600 are on the football field, which was in soggy condition Tuesday from recent rains and a football camp.

Besides the concert goers, about 700 people will be in the stadium working as security guards, selling concessions and merchandise, and helping with the stage, sound and lighting.

Ryan Campbell, a UM senior in liberal studies, is on security detail for the concert. "Getting paid to watch these shows -- it's one of the best things," he said.

McCall said they anticipate a serious parking crunch near the University Saturday. They are encouraging local concert goers to walk or bike to the event. Travelers coming into Missoula are asked to use Exit 104, Orange Street; Exit 105, VanBuren Street; or Exit 107, East Missoula; avoiding Exit 103 and the Reserve Street construction.

Parking is available at Caras Park and Central Park Garage in downtown Missoula and at Dornblaser Field, near the corner of South and Higgins avenues. A 7.4-acre field also will be used for parking. This field is located east of Exit 105 on Broadway near McKay's on the River. Shuttles will be available at Dornblaser Field and Caras Park between 3 p.m. and 1 a.m. the day of the concert. They will arrive every 20 minutes and charge \$1 per person for a round trip to the University Center.

No camping will be allowed at the stadium Friday evening. The stadium gates will open for concert goers at 4:30 p.m. Saturday. No cans, bottles, blankets, cameras or recording equipment of any kind will be allowed inside.

The opening band will be Goodness of Seattle.

Pearl Jam was one of the premier bands to lead the grunge rush out of Seattle in the early

1990s. The band's first three albums -- Ten (1991), Vs. (1993) and Vitology (1994) -- each sold between 5 million and 10 million copies. The band's fourth album, 1996's No Code, sold about 2 million copies, and this year's Yield has been released to broad critical acclaim. The band also collaborated with Soundgarden on 1991's Temple of the Dog and Neil Young on 1995's Mirror Ball.

Pearl Jam's current lineup includes lead vocalist Eddie Vedder, lead guitarist Mike McCready, rhythm guitarist Stone Gossard and drummer Matt Cameron. Bass guitarist Jeff Ament, a native of Big Sandy, Mont., attended UM for a time. Their hits include "Alive," "Even Flow," "Jeremy," "Daughter," "Nothingman" and "Given to Fly."

Graig Gilham, a UM junior from Browning, said he is excited to be working security for the show.

"There are going to be thousands upon thousands of people here," Gilham said. "It's going to be wild -- one of the biggest things to hit Missoula."

Kaycee Schilke, a UM Productions program adviser, said students have shouldered most of the load to make the concert a reality.

"Lots of students coming into our office, get a taste for the work and wind up working for the music promotions industry," Schilke said. "If these students didn't do what they do, western Montana probably wouldn't have half of its cultural activities."

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Local, state dailies, Spokane and Seattle newspapers
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